



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8**

1595 Wynkoop Street
DENVER, CO 80202-1129
Phone 800-227-8917
<http://www.epa.gov/region08>

MAR 24 2014

Ref: 8 EPR-N

Mr. Les Evarts
Fisheries Program Manager
Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
P.O. Box 278
Pablo, Montana 59855

Re: Proposed Strategies to Benefit Native Species by
Reducing the Abundance of Lake Trout in Flathead Lake
Final Environmental Impact Statement
CEQ # 20140042

Dear Mr. Evarts:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 has reviewed the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Proposed Strategies to Benefit Native Species by Reducing the Abundance of Lake Trout in Flathead Lake Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).


The purpose of this project is to benefit native fish by reducing the population of predacious lake trout in Flathead Lake using a combination of fisheries population management tools, including angling and netting. Specifically, the project will likely benefit the population of bull trout, which were listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act in 1998.

A copy our Draft EIS comment letter (and associated rating) was not included in the comment summary in the Final EIS. Although the EPA offered no substantive comments and rated the document with a "Lack of Objections" (LO), we recommend that the EPA letter and rating become an official part of the Final EIS and project file.

In our comments on the Draft EIS we recommended that the Final EIS would benefit from a narrative explaining the involvement of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) as a cooperating agency, and recommendations and concerns that have been considered during Draft EIS development. We continue to support this comment and recommend this narrative be included in the Final EIS.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this Final EIS. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 303-312-6704 or Robin Coursen of my staff at 303-312-6695 or coursen.robin@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

for 

Philip Strobel
Acting Director
NEPA Compliance and Review Program
Office of Ecosystems Protection and Remediation

cc: Barry Hansen, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe, barryh@cskt.org

